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10/081,278	02/21/2002	Christian Moy	770P101633-US (PAR)	9841

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EXAMINER	
WU, RUTAO	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3639	

DATE MAILED: 07/28/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/081,278	MOY ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Rutao Wu	3639	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *27 April 2006*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-34* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-34* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. In response filed April 27, 2006, the applicant amended claims 1, 7, 12, 13 and 30. No claims have been cancelled and no new claims are introduced. Claims 1-34 are pending in the application.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments, see page 10, filed April 27, 2006, with respect to claim 13 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The U.S.C. §112 rejection of claim 13 has been withdrawn.

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-34 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat No. 5,612,884 to Haines.

Referring to claim 1:

A customized modular mailing system including a module capable of metering value and having a postal security device and a plurality of disabled operating features that are not available for use (col 2: lines 40-43; col 5: lines 7-9); means for generating an authorization code for enabling certain designated operating features (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5); and means for entering the authorization code into the value metering module whereby the desired combination of operating modules having the desired operating features can be placed in communication with the metering value module to create the desired modular mailing system (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5).

Referring to claim 2:

A customized modular mailing system according to claim 1, wherein said module capable of metering value is a postage meter. (col 5: lines 6-9)

Referring to claim 3:

A customized modular mailing system according to claim 1, wherein said disabled operating features include both hardware implemented features and software implemented features. (col 2: lines 6-10, 40-43; col 5: lines 33-35)

Referring to claim 4:

A customized modular mailing system according to claim 3, wherein said features include a scale and a postal security device (col 5: lines 7-9; col 13: lines 50-52).

Referring to claim 5:

A customized modular mailing system according to claim 4 wherein said scale is a dynamic scale or a static scale (col 13: lines 50-52).

Referring to claim 7:

A customized modular mailing system comprising:

A value metering module having a postal security device and a plurality of disabled operating features, wherein the disabled operating features are not available for use. (col 2: lines 40-43; col 5: lines 7-9)

Means for selecting at least one of the operating features from the plurality of disabled operating features for enabling such features; (col 13: lines 54-67)

A parameter list for storing operating features. (col 13: lines 59-63)

Means for determining a unique serial number from at least one of the selected operating features and adding that unique serial number to the parameter list; (col 15: lines 25-39)

Means for generating an authorization code based on the parameter list for enabling the selected features of the value metering module; (col 14: lines 39-56)

Means for entering the authorization code into the value metering module for customizing the value metering module with the selected operating features. (col 15: lines 25-39)

Referring to claim 8:

A customized modular mailing system according to claim 7, further comprising:

Means for transmitting said parameter list to a third party; (col 14: lines 16-20)

Means for receiving said authorization code from the third party (col 14: line 47-48)

Referring to claim 9:

A customized module mailing system according to claim 8, wherein said third party is the manufacture of said value metering modules. (col 14: lines 7-9)

Referring to claim 10:

A customized modular mailing system according to claim 7, wherein said value metering module is a postage meter and the system includes means for determining a country and a postal carrier for which the postage meter will be used. (col 5: lines 51-54)

Referring to claim 12:

A customized modular mailing system adapted to have added thereto a new operating feature comprising:

A postage metering module having a postal security device and at least one disabled operating feature which is not available for use, and at least one enabled operating feature which is available for use; (col 2: lines 40-43; col 5: lines 7-9)

Means to add a new operating feature for adding to the postage metering module from the at least one disabled operating feature; (col 13: lines 54-67)

Means for generating an authorization code from the enabled operating features available for use, and from the selected disabled operating feature; and (col 14: lines 39-56)

Means to enter the authorization code into the postage metering module for enabling the selected operating feature for customizing the postage metering module with the selected operating features. (col 15: lines 25-39)

Referring to claim 14:

A customized modular mailing system in accordance with claim 12, wherein generating an authorization code includes:

Transmitting said enabling operating features available for use and said selected disabled operating feature to a third party; and (col 14: lines 16-20)

Receiving the authorization code for the third party. (col 14: line 47-48)

Referring to claim 15:

A customized modular mailing system in accordance with claim 14, wherein said third party to whom is transmitted said parameter list is a postage meter machine manufacture. (col 14: lines 7-9)

Referring to claim 16:

A customized modular mailing system according to claim 14, wherein transmitting said enabling operating features available for use and said selected disabled operating feature to said third party includes transmitting via the internet to said third party. (col 15: lines 61-64)

Referring to claim 17:

A customized modular mailing system according to claim 14, wherein receiving said authorization code from said third party includes receiving said authorization code via the internet. (col 15: lines 61-64)

Referring to claim 30:

A customized modular mailing system including a module capable of performing a mail related function and having a postal security device and a plurality of disabled operating features that are not available for use (col 2: lines 40-43; col 5: lines 7-9); means for generating an authorization code for enabling certain designated operating features (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5); and means for entering the authorization code into the capable of performing a mail related function module whereby the desired combination of operating modules having the desired operating features could be placed in communication with the module capable of performing a mail related function to create the desired modular mailing system (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 6, 19, 20, 22-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haines in view of U.S. Pat No. 5,898,785 to Cornell et al.

As per claim 6, Haines disclose accounting related system (col 5: lines 15-16) but does not expressly disclose transporting means, therefore, does not disclose a selection of letter flow speed.

Cornell et al discloses a transport module (col 1: lines 36-55). It is an inherent function of a transport module to have the ability of changing the speed to which envelopes move from a feeding position to the postage meter printing device. It is an inherent feature because it must be able to vary the speed to be the most efficient, not creating a backlog with too slow of a speed, or starvation with too fast of a speed.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include a transport module comprising means for transporting a document. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claim 19, Haines discloses a postage meter module having security means and printing means for printing a postal indicia; wherein the postage meter module includes a plurality of disabled operating features that are not available for use (col 2: lines 40-43; col 5: lines 7-9); the mailing system further comprising means for generating an authorization code for enabling certain designated operating features (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5) and means for entering the authorization code into the postage meter module whereby the desired combination of operating modules having the desired operating features could be placed in communication with the postage meter module to thereby create a desired modular mailing system. (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5).

Haines does not expressly disclose the meter module having a transport module comprising means for transporting a document.

Cornell et al discloses *mailing machine provides the necessary structure for moving the recording medium upon which the postal indicia is to be printed, from a feeding position to the postage meter printing device. The accounting structure of the postage meter is mechanically coupled to the postage meter printing mechanism and both are contained in a securely sealed postage meter housing. (col 1: lines 36-55)*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include the meter module having security means and a transport module comprising means for transporting a document. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claim 20, Haines discloses a scale module. (col 13: lines 50-52)

As per claims 22, 28, Haines does not expressly disclose wherein said document is an envelope.

Cornell et al discloses envelopes. (col 1: line 40)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to disclose envelopes. One would be motivated to perform such modification because both invention are from the same field of endeavor, both related to postage processing systems.

As per claim 23, Haines does not expressly disclose system comprising an envelope sealing module.

Cornell et al discloses an envelope sealing module. (col 1: lines 36-55)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include the envelope sealing module. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claim 24, Haines discloses a postage meter module having a plurality of disabled operating features that are not available for use (col 2: lines 40-43; col 5: lines 7-9); the mailing system further comprising means for generating an authorization code for enabling certain designated operating features (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5) and means for entering the authorization code into the postage meter module whereby the desired combination of operating modules having the desired operating features could be placed in communication with the postage meter module to thereby create a desired modular mailing system. (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5).

Haines does not expressly disclose the system having a module capable of feeding sheets.

Cornell et al discloses *in the simplest mailing machine, only a recording medium feeding mechanism is included. In more sophisticated mailing machines, known structure is provided along the mailpiece feed path to accomplish addition functions. (col 1: lines 36-55)*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to have a module capable of feeding sheets. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claim 25, Haines does not expressly disclose a module capable of feeding sheets and is also capable of separating sheets.

Cornell et al discloses *In more sophisticated mailing machines, known structure is provided along the mailpiece feed path to accomplish addition functions such as singulating individual envelopes. (col 1: lines 36-55)*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include a module capable of feeding sheets and is also capable of separating sheets. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claim 26, Haines does not expressly disclose the module capable of feeding sheets is also capable of moistening.

Cornell et al discloses *In more sophisticated mailing machines, known structure is provided along the mailpiece feed path to accomplish addition functions such as singulating individual envelopes moistening envelopes flaps. (col 1: lines 36-55)*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include a module capable of feeding sheets is also capable of moistening. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claim 27, Haines discloses wherein said disabled operating features include both hardware implemented features and software implemented features. (col 2: lines 6-10, 40-43; col 5: lines 33-35)

8. Claims 11, 31, 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haines in view of U.S. Pat No. 4,800,504 to Durst, JR. et al.

As per claim 11, Haines does not expressly disclose features include a scale, a stacker, and envelope sealing mechanism, an envelope moistening apparatus, a feeder/separator, and inserter, and an addresser.

Durst, Jr. et al discloses the above devices (Fig 2a)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include the above devices. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claim 31, Haines discloses a postage meter module having a plurality of disabled operating features that are not available for use (col 2: lines 40-43; col 5: lines 7-9); the mailing system further comprising means for generating an authorization code for enabling certain designated operating features (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5) and means for entering the authorization code into the postage meter module whereby the desired combination of operating modules having the desired operating features could be placed in communication with the postage meter module to thereby create a desired modular mailing system. (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5).

Haines does not disclose specific operating features for a feeder and a stacker.

Durst Jr. et al discloses a mail system with a feeder and a stacker. (Fig 2a)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include a feeder and a stacker. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claim 32, Haines discloses a postage meter module having a plurality of disabled operating features that are not available for use (col 2: lines 40-43; col 5: lines 7-9); the mailing system further comprising means for generating an authorization code for enabling certain designated operating features (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5) and means for entering the authorization code into the postage meter module whereby the desired combination of operating modules having the desired operating features could be placed in communication with the postage meter module to thereby create a desired modular mailing system. (col 2: lines 50-67; col 3: lines 1-5).

Haines does not disclose specific operating features for a scale but not for a stacker.

Durst Jr. et al discloses a mail system with a stacker. (Fig 2a)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include a stacker. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

9. Claims 13 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haines.

As per claim 13, Haines does not expressly disclose generating a charge for generating a authorization code for enabling features.

The Examiner asserts that it is obvious and well know for a service provider to charge for service performed and for extra features because the service provider would want financial returns for providing the services.

As per claim 18, Haines does not expressly disclose wherein entering said authorization code into said postage meter further includes creating an update chip card having the authorization code for releasing said disabled operator feature for use and inserting the update chip card into said postage meter and loading said authorization code from the chip card into said postage meter. However, Haines does disclose the ability for operators to insert a special key in the side of the meter to enable the meter. (col 17: lines 58-60) Therefore, it would have been obvious for the insertion of the special key to also enable previously disabled features.

10. Claims 21, 29, 33 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haines in view of Cornell et al and further in view of Durst Jr et al.

As per claims 21, 29, Haines combined with Cornell et al does not expressly disclose a document stacking module.

Durst, Jr. et al discloses a document stacking module (Fig 2a)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines combined with Cornell et al's invention to include a document stacking module. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

As per claims 33, 34, Haines combined with Durst Jr et al does not expressly disclose the feeder function includes both a sheet separation and moistening function.

Cornell et al discloses *In more sophisticated mailing machines, known structure is provided along the mailpiece feed path to accomplish addition functions such as singulating individual envelopes moistening envelopes flaps. (col 1: lines 36-55)*

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Durst Jr. et al's invention to include the sheet separator and moistening function from Cornell et al. One would be motivated to perform such modification because both inventions are from the same field of endeavor, both related to postage processing systems.

Also it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Haines' invention to include a feeder and a stacker. Haines' provides specific motivation by indicating the meter can communicate with various external devices. (col 13: lines 50-51)

Conclusion

11. Examiner's Note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims below for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested that the applicant, in preparing the responses, fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

U.S. Pat No. 5,107,455 to Haines et al.

U.S. Pat No. 5,615,120 to Schwartz et al.

U.S. Pub No. 2001/0042052 to Leon.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rutao Wu whose telephone number is (571)272-3136. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on (571)272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

rw

THOMAS A. DIXON
PRIMARY EXAMINER